Status of the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) ~~In a cursor-based computing apparatus having a display, a~~ A method, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

(a) displaying a user definable interface (UDI) in a selectable position within a display of an apparatus relative to any pointer position upon activation by a user, wherein the UDI has a plurality of levels each having a plurality of ~~buttons~~ command regions, wherein only one of the levels appears at a given time, and the UDI is displayed in a relative position about ~~a~~ the ~~cursor~~ pointer position ~~to reduce cursor commute~~;

(b) ~~permitting the user to select~~ selecting a visual appearance of the UDI including a ~~and~~ shape ~~of the UDI~~, and ~~the~~ number of the command regions ~~buttons~~, the visual appearance remaining substantially the same for each of the plurality of levels;

and

(c) ~~permitting the user to assign~~ assigning a command to each of the plurality of ~~buttons~~ command regions for each respective one of the plurality of levels by dragging and dropping from one or more applications of the apparatus.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein step (c) further comprises ~~the steps of~~:

(d) permitting the user to form a first group of buttons and at least a second group of buttons;

(e) permitting the user to assign a first icon representing a first specific one of the one or more applications to a first given button of the first group;

(f) permitting the user to assign commands, associated with the first specific one of the one or more applications to the second group of buttons;

(g) permitting the user to assign a second icon representing a second specific one of the one or more applications to a second given button of the first group; and

(h) permitting the user to assign commands, associated with the second specific one of the one or more applications to the second group of buttons;

wherein the appearance of, and commands associated with, the second group of buttons change based on which button of the first group of buttons is selected.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein activation by the user comprises at least one of:

clicking a hotkey;

clicking a mouse button; and

turning on the apparatus.

4. (currently amended) In an apparatus with a user-defined interface (UDI) having a plurality of levels, each having a plurality of command regions, a method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

(a) providing a command processor that manages an interactive skin (IS) whose visual appearance, which includes a shape and number of the commands regions, remains substantially the same at each of the plurality of levels, wherein only one of the levels appears at a give time, the IS having

i. a template that defines at least one of position information and visual appearance information for the plurality of command regions ~~corresponding to~~ in each respective one of the levels of the UDI and at least one of default attributes and default commands for the plurality of command regions, and

ii. a theme that defines at least one of

(1) attributes if the template only defines default commands for the plurality of command regions, and

(2) commands if the template only defines default attributes for the plurality of command regions; and

(b) providing a customizer that permits at least one of user replacing and user extending of at least one of the default attributes and the default commands of at least one of the plurality of command regions.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the customizer permits a user to hide the UDI.

6. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the customizer permits a user to hide a portion of the UDI.

7. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the customizer permits a user to have the UDI display upon launch.

8. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the customizer permits a user to launch the UDI from a system tray.

9. (currently amended) The method of claim 4, wherein the UDI is displayed in a relative position about a pointer ~~cursor~~ position.

10. (currently amended) The method of claim 9 ~~4~~, wherein the customizer permits a user to define the relative position.

11. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein the customizer permits a user to scale the size of the UDI.

12. (currently amended) In a ~~data processing~~ system having a user defined interface (UDI), a method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

(a) managing the UDI in response to user commands;

(b) providing at least one template defining a visual appearance of the UDI, which includes a shape and number of command regions, the visual appearance remaining substantially the same at each of a plurality of levels, wherein only one of the levels appears at a given time, the at least one template ~~that defines position~~ defining at least one of a position and a appearance for a plurality of command regions corresponding to each level of the UDI; and

(c) providing a theme that defines attributes and commands for the ~~for a~~ plurality of command regions.

13. (currently amended) An apparatus, comprising:

(a) a user defined interface (UDI) having a visual appearance, which includes a shape and number of command regions, the visual appearance remaining substantially the same at each of a plurality of levels, wherein each of the plurality of levels has a plurality of command regions, wherein only one of the levels appears at a given time;

(b) a command processor that manages an interactive skin (IS) having

i. a template that defines at least one of position information and visual appearance for the plurality of command regions ~~corresponding to~~ in the UDI and at least one of default attributes and default commands for the plurality of command regions, and

ii. a theme that defines at least one of

(1) attributes if the template only defines default commands for the plurality of command regions, and

(2) commands if the template only defines default attributes for the plurality of command regions; and

(c) a customizer that permits at least one of user replacing and user extending of at least one of the default attributes and the default commands of at least one of the plurality of command regions.

14. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the user is an end user.

15. (currently amended) A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having control logic stored therein for controlling ~~causing a computer to provide a cursor-based computing environment for use with~~ an apparatus having a display, said control logic comprising:

a first computer readable program code means for causing the ~~computer~~ apparatus to display a user definable interface (UDI) in a selectable position within the display relative to any pointer position upon activation by a user, wherein the UDI has a plurality of levels each having a plurality of ~~buttons~~ command regions, wherein only one of the levels appears at a given time, and the UDI is displayed in a relative position about the ~~a cursor~~ pointer position ~~to reduce cursor commute~~;

a second computer readable program code means for causing the ~~computer~~ apparatus to permit the user to select a visual appearance, which includes a ~~and~~ shape ~~of the UDI~~, and ~~the~~ number of command regions ~~buttons~~;

a third computer readable program code means for causing the visual appearance to remain substantially the same for each of the plurality of levels; and

a ~~third~~ fourth computer readable program code means for causing the ~~computer~~ apparatus to permit the user to assign a command to each of the plurality of ~~buttons~~ command regions for each respective one of the plurality of levels by dragging and dropping from one or more applications of the apparatus.

16. (Original) The computer program product of claim 15, further comprising:

a fifth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to permitting the user to form a first group of buttons and at least a second groups of buttons;

a sixth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to permit the user assigns an first icon representing a first specific one of the one or more applications to a first given button of the first group;

a seventh computer readable program code means for causing the computer to permit the user to assign commands, associated with the first specific one of the one or more applications to the second group of buttons;

a eighth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to permit the user assigns an second icon representing a second specific one of the one or more applications to a second given button of the first group; and

a ninth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to permit the user to assign commands, associated with the second specific one of the one or more applications to the second group of buttons;

wherein the appearance of, and commands associated with the second group of buttons change based on which button of the first group of buttons is selected.

17. (currently amended) A computer program product comprising a ~~computer~~ apparatus usable medium having a user defined interface (UDI) ~~control logic~~

~~stored therein for causing a computer to provide a cursor based computing environment for use with an apparatus having a display~~, said control logic comprising:

a first computer readable program code means for causing the apparatus ~~computer~~ to provide a command processor to manage the UDI;

a second computer readable program code means for causing the ~~computer~~ apparatus to provide at least one template defining a shape and number of command regions for the UDI, the visual appearance remaining substantially the same at each of a plurality of levels, wherein only one of the levels appears at a given time, the at least one template defining ~~that defines position~~ at least one of positions and appearances for a plurality of the command regions corresponding to each level of the UDI; and

a third computer readable program code means for causing the ~~computer~~ apparatus to provide a theme that defines attributes and commands for the for ~~a~~ the plurality of command regions.

18. (currently amended) ~~A cursor based computing~~ An apparatus comprising:

~~(a) first~~ means for displaying a user definable interface (UDI) in any selectable position within a display relative to a pointer position upon activation by a user, wherein the UDI has a plurality of levels each having a plurality of ~~buttons~~ command regions, wherein only one of the levels appears at a given time, and the UDI is displayed in a relative position about ~~a~~ the pointer ~~cursor~~ position ~~to reduce cursor commute~~;

~~(b) second~~ means for permitting the user to select a visual appearance of the UDI, which includes a ~~and~~ shape ~~of the UDI,~~ and ~~the~~ number of command regions ~~buttons~~, the visual appearance remaining substantially the same for each level of the plurality of levels, wherein only one of the levels appears at a given time; and

~~(c) third~~ means for permitting the user to assign a command to each of the plurality of ~~buttons~~ command regions for each respective one of the levels by dragging and dropping from one or more applications of the apparatus.

19. (currently amended) The ~~cursor-based computing~~ apparatus of claim 18, wherein said means for permitting the user to assign a command ~~third means~~ further comprises:

~~(d) fourth~~ means for permitting the user to form a first group of buttons and at least a second group of buttons;

~~(e) fifth~~ means for permitting the user to assign a first icon representing a first specific one of the one or more applications to a first given button of the first group;

~~(f) sixth~~ means for permitting the user to assign commands, associated with the first specific one of the one or more applications to the second group of buttons;

~~(g) seventh~~ means for permitting the user to assign a second icon representing a second specific one of the one or more applications to a second given button of the first group; and

~~(h) eighth~~ means for permitting the user to assign commands, associated with the second specific one of the one or more applications to the second group of buttons;

wherein the appearance of, and commands associated with, the second group of buttons change based on which button of the first group of buttons is selected.

20. (currently amended) The ~~cursor-based computing~~ apparatus of claim 18, wherein activation by the user comprises at least one of:

clicking a hotkey;

clicking a mouse button; and

turning on the apparatus.

21. (currently amended) An apparatus comprising:

(a) a user-defined interface (UDI) having a visual appearance, which includes a shape and number of command regions, the visual appearance remaining substantially the same at each of a plurality of levels, wherein only one of the levels appears at a given time ~~a plurality of command regions~~;

(b) command processor means for managing an interactive skin (IS) having

i. a template that defines at least one of position information and visual appearance for the plurality of command regions corresponding to the UDI and at least one of default attributes and default commands for the plurality of command regions, and

ii. a theme that defines at least one of

(1) attributes if the template only defines default commands for the plurality of command regions, and

(2) commands if the template only defines default attributes for the plurality of command regions; and

(c) customizer means that permits at least one of user replacing and user extending of at least one of the default attributes and the default commands of at least one of the plurality of command regions.

22. (currently amended) The ~~cursor-based computing~~ apparatus of claim 21 ~~4~~, wherein said customizer means permits a user to hide the UDI.

23. (currently amended) The ~~cursor-based computing~~ apparatus of claim 21, wherein said customizer means permits a user to hide a portion of the UDI.

24. (currently amended) The ~~cursor-based computing~~ apparatus of claim 21, wherein said customizer means permits a user to have the UDI display upon launch.

25. (currently amended) The ~~cursor-based computing~~ apparatus of claim 21, wherein said customizer means permits a user to launch the UDI from a system tray.

26. (currently amended) The ~~cursor-based computing~~ apparatus of claim 21, wherein the UDI is displayed in a relative position about a cursor position.

27. (currently amended) The ~~cursor-based computing~~ apparatus of claim 26 ~~21~~, wherein the customizer permits a user to define the relative position.

28. (currently amended) The ~~cursor-based computing~~ apparatus of claim 21, wherein the customizer permits a user to scale the size of the UDI.

29. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein before step (c) the method comprises:

selecting a visual appearance of each of the command regions including at least one of a shape and a location within the UDI.

30. (New) The computer program product of claim 15, further comprising:

a fifth computer readable program code means for selecting at least one of a shape and a location within the UDI for each of the plurality of command regions at each respective one of the levels.

31. (New) The apparatus of claim 18, further comprising:

means for permitting the user to select at least one of a visual appearance or location in the UDI for each of the plurality of comments regions at each respective one of the levels.